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The ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN



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THE ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN

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February, 1932

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Washington, D. C.

Some Aspects of Classification Administration

By

W. H. McReynolds,
Director of Classification.

One of the most important responsibilities of the departments and the Board in the administration of the Classification Act is keeping allocations correctly adjusted one to another. This means taking account of changes in duties and responsibilities of positions as they materially change, and straightening out grades where inconsistencies and lack of uniformity are found to exist. As a procedure for accomplishing these results the group survey method has been found to be very satisfactory. We are using it more and more and plan to extend its application in the future.

Primary Functions to Keep Alloca- tions Adjusted

By a survey we mean a classification audit of all the positions in a given group so as to determine the facts currently and make whatever classification adjustments are found to be necessary. The scope of a survey may include several hundred positions in a division or small bureau or it may include several thousand positions in a large bureau. In some cases it is not confined within the organizational lines of one department, but may cover all the positions in a given field of work, or series of classes, in whatever departments they may be found.

Surveys as a Classifica- tion Audit

In the conduct of a survey, the facts as to the duties and responsibilities of each position are thoroughly investigated. Each position is dealt with not only by itself--which is as far as a good many investigations of single positions go--but also with particular regard to its relationships:

Individual Positions Surveyed

- (1) Its relation to the functions and structure of the organization in which it is located:
- (2) Its relation to other positions in the same organization.
- (3) Its similarity to or divergence from other positions in the same field of work wherever they may be located in the departmental service.

All these aspects of relationship are extremely important. The fact that many related positions are thus investigated and appraised simultaneously gives the survey or classification-audit a great advantage as contrasted with a procedure of dealing with such positions one at a time at segregated intervals.

- (1) We are able more effectively to secure uniformity and coordination of allocations within and across departmental lines.

(2) There is developed a definiteness of knowledge on the part of the bureau, the department, the employees, and the Board alike as to the proper relative allocations of all the positions in a given unit or in a given field of work, one to another.

Benefits of Such a Survey

- (3) There are built up some thoroughly considered and deliberate allocation precedents and standards together with a background of facts that

permits the use of such precedents and standards in other cases, not blindly or mechanically, but intelligently by comparisons of facts.

(4) Furthermore, surveys sometimes bring to light quite material changes in duties and responsibilities which have developed so gradually that the department itself was not aware of them.

Another beneficial aspect of a survey--although perhaps a somewhat minor one--is that it paves the way for a simplification of the clerical procedure between the department concerned and the Board. This is particularly true where the survey includes one or more groups composed of identical positions. In such cases a master classification sheet is prepared. This one sheet then represents all the identical positions in the group, no matter how many there are. Original action in connection with the survey is taken by the department and the Board upon the master sheet, to which is attached simply a list of the names of the employees occupying the positions. Subsequent changes in the personnel of the group, such as new appointments, replacement of an employee by another, and separations are followed through, not by a new classification sheet, completely executed, which is now generally the case, but by changes in the list only in the department's and board's files.

Another project having possibilities of important future development is making more conveniently available for future use the basic information we accumulate. This is done through an office study and analysis of the facts in our files which concern a given series of classes, i.e., all classes in a given field of work covering several or many grades. The employee working on such an assignment is required to study classification sheets, investigators' and examiners' reports, transcripts of hearings, and particularly survey reports. The first product of his analysis is a list of the pertinent factors which enter into the allocations of positions in the field assigned him. After this has been reviewed, he writes a unified report, discussing in particular the differentiation in the characteristics or combinations of these factors as among the several grades, and defining an allocation policy for the positions concerned.

The significance of this work lies not only in the fact that its results will be helpful to the investigators, examiners, and officials of the Board, and that necessary readjustments in allocations will come to light thereby, but also in the fact that it constitutes the first step in the writing of revised class specifications for the departmental service.

We have made up our minds that there is little advantage in issuing revised class specifications unless they are both clear and useful to the departmental officials as well as to ourselves. For this reason we have departed from the usual method of doing this work by requiring that a preliminary office analysis be made in writing and that it be passed upon as a statement of existing allocation policy, before the information is incorporated in formal style in published class specifications. We have tentatively decided, also, in the interests of clarity and usefulness, that the revised class specifications will be accompanied by certain running text; for example, explanations of the meaning with which certain terms and expressions are used in the

specifications, or statements in narrative form of the lines of distinction among certain of the classes.

Of course the largest project that we have to look forward to is the extension of classification administration to the field service. Much has been said upon that subject and much will continue to be said, and Field Class- it is not my purpose to discuss the matter in detail. However, ification there are a few points of broad significance that I would like Approaching to mention. First of all, it is contemplated that, except for certain groups of positions for which a special procedure is provided, there will be one coordinated classification and pay system for both the departmental and field services, not two separate plans. There is contemplated no change in the fundamental principles of classification as we know it. Broadly speaking, there will be uniformity of administration, although considerations of time, distance, and expense will necessitate differences in detail from the procedure followed now in the departmental service.

The success of any plan for administering classification in the field service will, however, depend fully as much upon the cooperation of the departmental officials in Washington as upon any authority and any appropriation given to the board.

The closing report of the Personnel Classification Board contains a rather complete general discussion of the classification problem. It is well worth while reading, for there is much in that report, Closing Report I believe, that would be helpful to administrative officials Sets Out Facts in dealing with problems in the departmental service as well in Detail as in dealing with the correlated classification adjustments which they themselves are authorized to make in their field branches.

In this report we stated frankly that the contemplated procedure for classification administration which we described in that volume was based on the assumption that there would be set up in each department and establishment an organization unit to exercise a closely-knit control by the department itself over the collection of facts and their analysis and evaluation and to make appropriate recommendations to the Board. This unit would act for the various field offices and bureaus of the department in somewhat the same capacity as the Board now acts for the departments in Washington, that is, as a coordinating office with final authority for the department.

In those departments that have set up a central control over field allocations and have made effort to obtain the facts currently as to their field positions and to appraise and allocate them in a systematic and uniform manner, the difficulties of future classification administration are very materially diminished, Some Departments both for those departments and the board. It is not too are Already Class- much to say, I imagine, that the departments which are ifying Field doing such work well are actually experiencing the advantages of a systematic classification in managing their field forces and in getting the facts and finding the answers on many of their field personnel problems.

An Effective Auditing Procedure For Preventing Duplicate Payments and for Other Purposes

By

James B. Sellars, Chief Auditor,
Plant Quarantine and Control Administration.

One of the important objects of a bureau administrative audit, of all kinds of vouchers is to prevent duplicate payments. In this connection, the ideal procedure for detecting duplication is one which prevents the payment of the second voucher which, if paid, would represent a duplicate payment. This is far better than a procedure which may find that a duplicate payment has been made, which necessitates a request on the payee for a refund, with attendant embarrassment and danger that restitution will not be made.

The system described in the following paragraphs, which has been developed and is in use by the Plant Quarantine and Control Administration, meets the aforementioned requirement. It is simple in operation, and has proved to be very satisfactory and productive of information that is put to practical and important use.

In connection with vouchers paid in Washington, duplicate payments are avoided. In the handling of vouchers paid in the field by temporary special disbursing agents, the record will not in all cases prevent duplicate payments, but these are detected at once and immediate adjustments are obtained. Field disbursing agent's vouchers are submitted to Washington weekly for audit.

The vouchers handled by this Administration fall into four general classes as follows: Pay roll vouchers, reimbursement vouchers, purchase vouchers, agreement vouchers. These various classes of vouchers are sub-divided. The pay roll vouchers are sub-divided into three classes: Washington pay roll, field pay roll and labor pay roll. The reimbursement accounts and purchase vouchers are not sub-divided into classes, but each group is handled in a single class. The agreement vouchers fall into four divisions, representing informal agreements, formal agreements, leases and public utilities.

A card index of each appointee, both Washington and field, is maintained in the Audit Section, for use in checking pay rolls. These cards are carried in a visible file in one straight alphabetical list, including

<u>Pay Roll</u>	both Washington and field appointees and temporary laborers employed
<u>Vouchers</u>	under letter of authorization. Therefore, the record of payments

to any particular employee can appear at only one point. This record is quickly prepared and carries information which should appear upon the pay roll. In addition to this information, each card carries a blocked space showing the months from January to December, inclusive, on the left side with calendar years across the top. When the pay roll for any particular month is audited and found correct, a pencil check mark is placed in the appropriate square in this blocked space, representing the month and year involved. For the Washington pay rolls two check marks are placed in each square because two pay rolls are prepared each month. For the field pay rolls only one check mark is placed in the square for any one month. Should a pay roll later be presented for audit carrying the name of an employee whose salary for any particular month had previously been checked in the appropriate square, the pre-

vious check acts as an automatic reminder to the auditor that a previous payment has been made. The presence of a check mark in the square for any particular month automatically prevents the passing of a subsequent voucher.

In the handling of labor pay rolls, effort is made not only to prevent duplicate payments, but also to prevent such temporary workers being employed during any one year under letter of authorization beyond the Civil Service or departmental limitations. The card records of these workers are maintained in the visible file mentioned above in straight alphabetical order. The record under each pay roll is entered upon this card, showing the inclusive dates, the number of authorization, and the accumulated days during the present season's employment. The number of days on each individual roll is not shown on the card, since the purpose of the record is to prevent duplicate payments and we are, therefore, interested only in locating duplications of periods of service. By entering this information on one line of the card, and each subsequent pay roll entry upon the next following blank line, there is before the auditor at the time of making each entry, a record of the periods of each previous employment and the total number of days employed during the present season. While this is not so nearly automatic in the preventing of duplicate payments as the method of handling the pay rolls as indicated above, it does, nevertheless, bring before the auditor the record of previous periods of employment.

The card record maintained covering reimbursement accounts, purchase vouchers, and vouchers under all forms of agreement, provides for entering on one line of the card for the individual payee, a record of the period covered, the amount of the voucher and the date audited. The carrying of this information on the visible index card has proven very effective in preventing the passing of duplicate vouchers, since it serves to bring before the eyes of the auditor at the time of entering each voucher the record of the periods covered by all previous vouchers.

Reimbursement Accounts,
Purchase Vouchers and
Vouchers Under All
Forms of Agreement

These records are made on strong, light weight cards (white bond, substance 28, 100% rag) about $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches long by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, punched with 12 holes across one end and filed in loose leaf visible binders.

Types of Cards
and Binders Used These binders are indexed and the cards are filed alphabetically. The binders are 11 inches wide by 17 inches high and each page will accommodate a maximum of 25 cards. The cards are so arranged in the binders that when the book is opened to any page the lower margin of each card on the page is visible, and on this visible margin is placed the name and address of the payee.

These binders are all kept on a table centrally located in the Auditing Section so that they are available to all auditors. When one of the auditors has completed the auditing of a number of vouchers, he takes them to the table where the record binders are kept and proceeds to enter the record of each voucher on the appropriate card. When one of the books is opened to any page the names of the payees on all cards on that page are readily visible without moving any of the cards. The auditor merely glances down the page until the proper name is reached and makes the record on that card. This saves the time which would be required to search out the card in a vertical file, take out the card, make the entry, and return the card to its proper place in the file.

It should be understood that the records mentioned above are in no sense duplications of the bookkeeping record. They are used as a check to prevent duplicate payments. The time involved in making and maintaining the records is relatively small, and has been absorbed by the regular force of the Audits Section without any additional help. The results obtained in preventing the payment of duplicate vouchers and its use for other purposes has amply justified the maintenance of the records even though it had required additional assistance.

No Duplication
of Bookkeeping
Records

1. Prevents duplicate payments.
2. Prevents the exceeding of Civil Service or departmental limitations on employment of certain temporary workers during any one year under letters of authorization.

Purposes Which
Record Serves

3. Furnishes alphabetical reference list and fiscal record of all payees, including all employees.
4. Complete record of all employments under letters of authorization, including names, projects, rate of payment, and period of time employed.
5. A medium for automatic holding up of payments for any special reasons, by putting "stop orders" or notes on the cards.

---PBA---

INVENTORY RECORD CARDS

The inventory record card covering a specific article of government property should include the date of acquisition, authority under which purchased, cost, and a comprehensive description with serial number, if any. Such means of identification are of material assistance in making a physical check of government property each year. However, in the case of certain technical equipment a full descriptive identification is insufficient to insure a correct physical check. The officers in charge of the larger field stations of the Department of Agriculture often assign to an assistant the responsibility of taking an inventory at the end of the fiscal year, and in many cases this assistant is not a professional man and is therefore not familiar with articles of a technical nature. It is not expected that every worker in the Department of Agriculture should be able to describe such articles as Duboscq Colorimeter, Revolving Microtome, Convertible Sub-stage Lamp, Aplanatic Magnifier, Paraboloid Condenser, Telomagnifier, Hygrothermograph, and Photomicrographic Camera.

As a means of insuring a practical and definite location of any article or piece of equipment which is being carried on inventory it is suggested that a cut of the particular article be made from the trade catalog and mounted on the reverse side of the inventory card. By using this dual means of identification there should be no reason for carrying an article on inventory under more than one classification.

Contributed by---

Dewey L. Varmette, Chief Scientific Aid,
U.S. Peach Disease Field Laboratory,
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Executive Epigrams - "To Hire but Not To Fire"

By

F. H. Spencer, Business Manager,
Bureau of Entomology.

Confronted with a bottle of sour milk, the inexperienced cook throws it away. The seasoned housekeeper proceeds to make cookies.

Too many employment managers are of the "throw-it-away" school. If a man does not come up to expectations on his first assignment, out he goes. No effort is made to find out where the trouble lay, how it might have been corrected, or whether the employee might not have been simply the proverbial "square peg in a round hole."

A policy of this sort does not appeal to the personnel executive who has much sense of responsibility to his organization or fairness to his employees. We live in a machine age, but the human element is still the most vital factor in industry. It takes time and costs money to hire and train an employee. Is it good business to lose that investment by discharging him without making every effort to place him where he can play an effective part in the functioning of the organization? Is it fair to the employee? Does it promote morale? If there was ever a day when "hard-boiled" and "efficient" were synonymous terms in management, that day is definitely past.

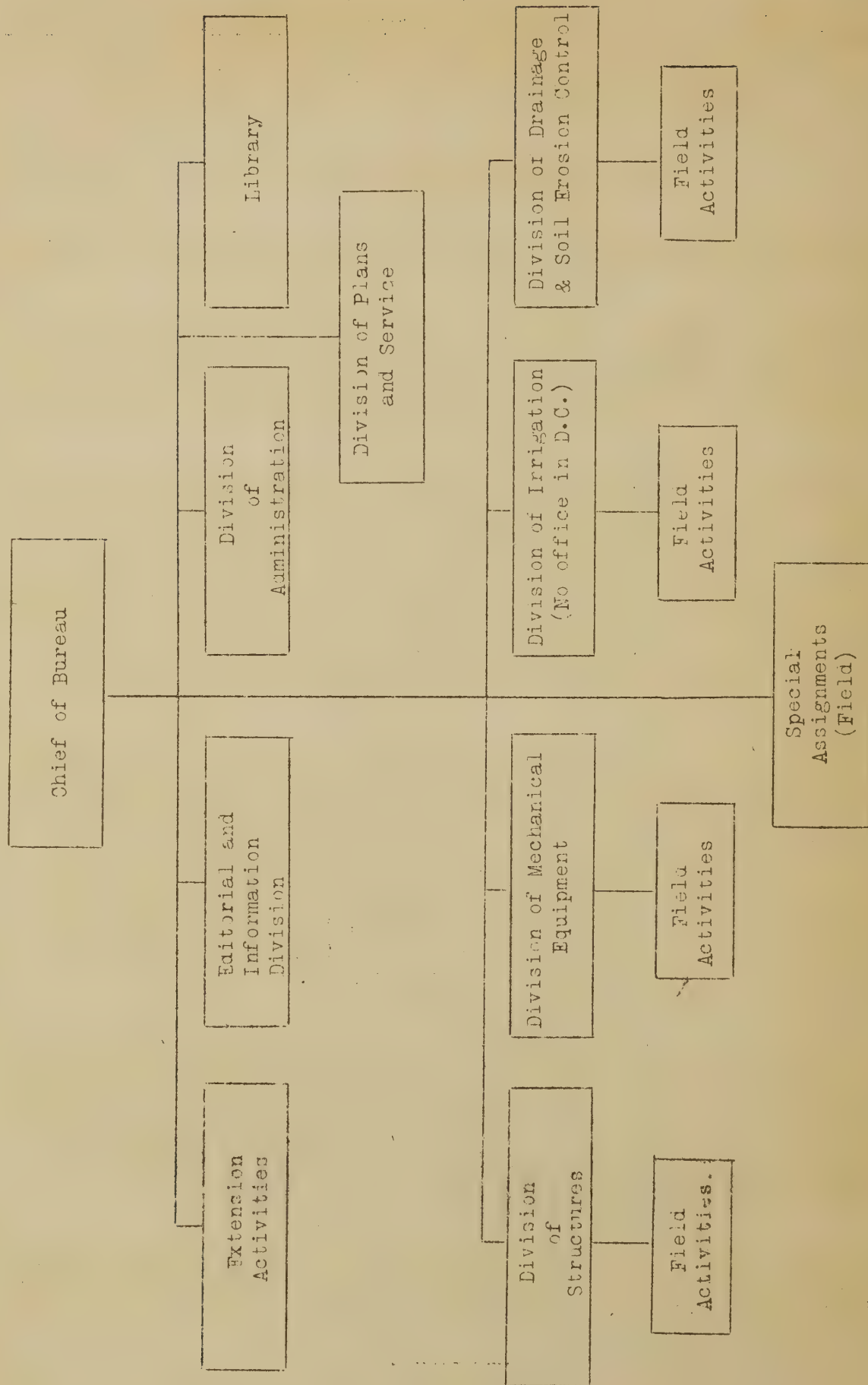
But the sorting of square and round pegs and their placement in the proper holes is only a part of the picture of employment management, and a rather negative part at that. What about the people who are making good in their present positions? The alert manager is always one step ahead of the situation, thinking, "Is Smith's job bringing out his full capabilities? Shouldn't Jones be moved up at the first opening? Is Brown ready for Green's place when he retires?" He is just as anxious to recognize merit as he is to weed out inefficiency - to train his men for additional responsibilities and to see that their fitness for such responsibilities is recognized by promotions.

And such a policy pays. Nothing so inspires loyalty and enthusiasm in an organization as the knowledge that the men at the top have come up from the ranks, that there is room in high places for other men of industry and ability, and that the door of opportunity for useful service and advancement is open to everyone. With this knowledge, an employee in a very small job can be happy. Without it, a department manager will feel the walls of a blind alley closing in on him.

The modern employment manager will see to it that his organization is one which not only hires men, but which also places them intelligently, trains them, and offers them that opportunity for advancement which every normal human being craves.

United States Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Agricultural Engineering

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The Bureau of Agricultural Engineering

By

S. H. McCrory, Chief,
Bureau of Agricultural Engineering

The nucleus of the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering was formed on July 1, 1898 when there was set up by Congress as a Branch of the Office of Experiment Stations a unit designated as "Irrigation Information", the duties of which were to collect from agricultural colleges, agricultural experiment stations, and other sources "valuable information and data on the subject of irrigation". This work had not gone far when it was realized that the matter of drainage was inextricably involved in irrigation and authority was granted to conduct investigations relating to the drainage of irrigated land. The drainage work was gradually extended eastward to cover the humid section of the United States.

By 1904 the work of irrigation and drainage had advanced to a point where it was deemed advisable to consolidate this work in a separate unit known as "Irrigation and Drainage Investigations", under the Office of Experiment Stations. In 1909 the two branches became separate administrative units with separate appropriations, still functioning, however, under the Office of Experiment Stations. This type of organization continued until 1915 when the Office of Public Roads and Rural Engineering took over, not only the irrigation and drainage work of the Office of Experiment Stations but also the activities in the field of farm machinery and farm structures that, up to that time, had been carried by the then Office of Farm Management. In 1925 the irrigation and drainage appropriations were combined and there was added, in the following year, that for machinery and structures. Thus was formed, under the Bureau of Public Roads, the Division of Agricultural Engineering to operate under one lump-sum appropriation.

During these years the agricultural engineering work of the Department had steadily gained in scope and volume and the Agricultural Appropriation Act for the fiscal year 1932 made provision for establishing a bureau, effective July 1, 1931.

The work of the bureau is chiefly research carried on in the laboratory and in the field. Its studies and investigations are conducted for the most part in cooperation with other bureaus of the Department, with the state agricultural experiment stations, and in a few instances with trade associations.

The bureau is organized into seven administrative and subject-matter divisions designated as follows:

- Division of Administration
- Editorial and Information Division
- Division of Irrigation
- Division of Drainage and Soil Erosion Control
- Division of Mechanical Equipment
- Division of Structures
- Division of Plans and Service

DIVISION OF IRRIGATION

The Division of Irrigation, W. W. McLaughlin, Chief, is engaged in experimental field and laboratory studies designed to improve the irrigation practices of the arid West. Chiefly, the work is directed along those lines that tend to result in the conservation of the limited supplies of water available for irrigation. Thus the studies at the present time deal with the duty of irrigation water--that is, the determination of water requirements of crops; the development of methods and equipment for measuring water, conducting it to the farm, and applying it; and the determination of the best means of replenishing the water supply in the underground reservoirs. In addition, special studies are in progress dealing with the specific relation of irrigation and drainage to the health and growth of fruit trees, and with the various types of organization desirable in carrying out irrigation enterprises. Since irrigation sooner or later almost invariably involves artificial drainage, this latter problem also is the subject of study. The headquarters of the Division of Irrigation is at Berkeley, California. A number of field stations are maintained throughout the arid West.

DIVISION OF DRAINAGE AND SOIL EROSION CONTROL

The Division of Drainage and Soil Erosion Control, Lewis A. Jones, Chief, is concerned with the disposal of excess water from the standpoint of improving farm land. The activities are largely confined to the securing of experimental data, the application of which tends to improve drainage practices. One important line of study, for instance, is the experimental determination of the rate at which excess water must be removed to afford good drainage. Another is the study of the durability of drain tile under various conditions as to soil water as well as to materials of construction. The large-scale removal of drainage water by pumping has been the subject of investigation for many years, and recently there has been taken up a study of drainage-ditch maintenance.

In connection with soil erosion control, the bureau is charged with carrying on the engineering phases of the project set up as a result of appropriations specifically made by Congress in recent years for this purpose. The bureau's work is particularly concerned with the engineering devices, such as terraces and dams, employed in retarding the rate and volume of flow of runoff water and thus preventing soil washing, and with the problems involved in operating tillage and harvesting machinery over terraces.

DIVISION OF MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

The Division of Mechanical Equipment, headed by R. B. Gray, carries on in the field and laboratory, studies the fundamental purposes of which are to develop the actual requirements of machinery as applied to agriculture. The studies in progress come chiefly under three heads; first, those dealing with the application of machinery to particular crops; second, the engineering problems involved in processing crops; and third, those concerned with mechanical means of combating insect pests. Under the first type, investigations are in progress of the application of machinery to the growing and harvesting of sugar beets, to cotton production, and to corn production and harvesting. In the field of crop processing, studies are being made of the artificial

dehydration of forage crops and of small grains. The outstanding project of the third class is that in connection with the control of the European corn borer, which includes the development and use of machines and attachments to machines the operation of which, in ordinary cultural work, tends to destroy the borer. Other projects relating to pest control include the application of mechanical methods to the control of the pink bollworm of cotton, and the development of more satisfactory equipment for spraying insecticides.

DIVISION OF STRUCTURES

The Division of Structures, Wallace Ashby, Chief, deals with the fundamental problems of building construction and building equipment as related to the farm. This division also handles the subjects of farm water supply, sewerage disposal, and lighting and heating. Chief among the subjects under study at present are those relating to the dairy barn and structures for the trackside storage of potatoes. The division is also taking active part in connection with the studies being made under the auspices of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership.

DIVISION OF PLANS AND SERVICE

The work of the Division of Plans and Service, M. C. Betts, Chief, is principally the rendering of engineering and architectural assistance to other bureaus of the Department of Agriculture in connection with the designing and constructing of facilities needed by the bureaus in their work. The assistance so rendered consists in the preparation of plans and specifications for structures, specifications for equipment, the making of surveys and maps, and the supervision of construction work.

At the present time two of the bureau's projects are carried as special assignments, the engineer in charge reporting directly to the chief of bureau.

Special Assignments

One of these is the study of the mechanical phases of the cotton ginning study under way at a specially constructed laboratory at Stoneville, Mississippi. C. A. Bennett is in direct charge of this work. The other, assigned to George R. Boyd, is the carrying on of studies, the purpose of which is to develop plans for improving the physical characteristics of farms with the object of making them more adaptable to economical operation, having in mind the particular type of farming carried on. This project deals with the subjects of removing obstacles to cultivation, enlarging fields, straightening field boundaries, the provision of drainage and erosion control facilities, etc.

No effort has been made in the above to state the cooperative relations that exist in the various projects. As a matter of fact, practically all of them either are parts of more comprehensive projects, or involve phases other than engineering that require that they be carried out on a cooperative basis.

Cooperative Relations

In the interests of agricultural engineering extension the bureau has an arrangement with the Department Extension Service under which the full time of a senior agricultural engineer is devoted to this field. S. P. Lyle acts as contact man between the bureau, the Federal Extension Service, and the State agricultural extension service.

MISTAKES IN BIDS

Among the major perplexities attending the business of purchasing officers of the department are those arising from alleged mistakes in bids and the desire of bidders either to withdraw or modify their offers accordingly. A problem of this sort was recently presented to this department when bids were opened for 62 units of a certain article of equipment. Of the two lowest bidders one quoted a unit price of \$31.50 but carried out an extension of \$1,890. This made his bid as to total somewhat less than that of a competitor whose unit bid was \$31.25 and who had correctly extended it in the sum of \$1,937.50. When the mistake was called to the attention of the local representative, present at the opening, of the firm in whose bid it occurred, he was unable to offer explanation and telegraphed to his firm for instructions. The reply was that the firm desired to abide by the total price of \$1,890, but without explanation of the discrepancy. The matter was of necessity referred to the Comptroller General. His decision, A-39801, of January 7, 1932, announces the following conclusions: "A telegram from the company after such inspection (of bids) by its representative cannot overcome the rule stated in the standard form that in the event of error the unit price would govern, - particularly when there was no explanation as to the unit price, - and it is much more important to the public interest that there be strictly observed the rules established for the consideration and determination of bids than that there be a small saving in such a purchase."

---PBA---

Low Operating Costs of B. A. I. Motor Vehicles

By

Louis V. Woulfe

Bureau of Animal Industry

A recent compilation of the cost of operating passenger cars and small trucks in the Bureau of Animal Industry, during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1931, shows the greater economy of Government-owned vehicles over those privately owned.

The cost of operating the 179 passenger cars and 61 small trucks owned by the bureau was 2.71 cents per mile for upkeep, gasoline, oil, cleaning of car, tire repairs, and storage. Interest and depreciation are valued at 1.5 cents a mile more, making a total of 4.21 cents. The total number of bureau's motor vehicles, operating in 45 states, as of June 30, 1931, was 240, or 26 per cent of those owned by the Department of Agriculture. The average annual mileage of B. A. I. cars was 12,045 miles. The cost of operation per vehicle was \$326.

The analysis of costs further shows that the 179 passenger cars covered, in official travel during the last fiscal year, a total of more than 2,000,000 miles, at a total cost of about \$56,500. These automobiles were run at an average cost of 2.75 cents per mile, not including interest and depreciation. The mileage during the year of the average passenger vehicle was 11,486 miles, at a cost of slightly more than \$300 per car.

The small trucks covered more than 834,000 miles, at an aggregate cost of nearly \$22,000. Their cost per mile was 2.63 cents, not including interest and depreciation. The travel for these trucks was 13,585 miles, at an average operating cost of \$359. The combined travel for all vehicles was 2,890,828 miles, at a total cost of less than \$78,500.

If the same mileage had been covered by rail, which, of course, would not have been possible in reaching farms and ranches, at 3.6 cents per mile, the aggregate railroad fare, not including pullman charges, would have amounted to more than \$104,000 or about \$25,500 more than shown by motor-vehicle usage. Assuming that many of the miles were covered with more than one passenger in the car or truck, there is to be reckoned as a result an additional economy in favor of the Government. If the same number of miles had been covered by use of personally owned autos, at the rate of 7 cents per mile, the usual rate paid for such service, the figure would have mounted to \$202,357 or nearly \$124,000 more than the cost of operating the government-owned vehicles. The Government, however, obtains tires, gasoline, oil, repairs, accessories, and sometimes even cars at materially lower cost than the average private owner is able to do.

These passenger cars and small trucks are used by the Bureau of Animal Industry largely to carry employees, camp and testing materials promptly to animal-disease-affected areas, and to expedite the inspection of farms and ranches remote from railroads. In practice, this mode of transportation has facilitated an economical administration of the bureau's functions. The projects to which these vehicles are allotted cover (1) the eradication of tuberculosis in all sections of the United States; (2) the eradication of cattle ticks in the southern quarantine zones; (3) the eradication of scabies in range areas; (4) the control of hog cholera, and (5) travel in connection with meat inspection. The cars and small trucks are distributed by geographical areas, as follows: South Central States, 86; Western, 66; South Atlantic, 35; West North Central, 25; North Atlantic, 17; and East North Central, 11.

---PBA---

THE DEPARTMENT WATCH FORCE

Probably nowhere in the government service are members of the watch or guard force required to assume as many varied duties and responsibilities as are those located in the Department of Agriculture, according to H. A. Nelson, Chief of the Division of Operation. In addition to their regular rounds of inspection the watchmen within this Department are often times required to empty refrigerator drip pans, observe the operations of scientific apparatus, and are always confronted with unusual fire and flood hazards. As the organizations of the Department occupy widely scattered buildings, the cost of this service is extremely high, and it is only possible to maintain the watch force within its appropriation limits by the most careful economy in expenditures. The force at the present time consists of approximately 90 officers and men, but this fact is never realized by the average departmental worker as only two officers and ten men are ordinarily on duty during the hours from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the personnel of the Department has little opportunity to observe the operations of this organization.

In order to properly guard the buildings it is necessary that an adequate check be kept on people within the building after regulation working hours.

To this end registers are maintained of all persons entering or leaving the building at any other time than the ordinary office hours, and admission is permitted only by presentation of building passes. Unfortunately there appears to be some slight misunderstanding on the part of the employees who are called upon to present passes before entering the building as to the necessity for this procedure. Frequent changes in the assignments of the members of the guard force are necessary, and under such circumstances it is not surprising that even veteran employees are unknown to some of the guards at one time or another, and hence passes are required to be shown before any one can enter the building. Mr. Nelson states that the watchmen who fail to require the display of official passes by persons not personally known to them are delinquent in their duty, and urges the members of the Department who enter the building after the regulation working hours to cooperate to the fullest extent in assisting the guard force to maintain their proper records and in the efficient performance of their duty.

Employees approached by persons soliciting or selling in the various buildings are requested to immediately notify either the watchman on duty or the watch office, as the regulations of the Department prohibit these activities within the buildings. The members of the watch force are responsible for the administration of this regulation, but frequently salesmen and solicitors gain admission without their knowledge. Constant effort is being made to improve the character of the service rendered by this organization, and any suggestions or criticism to this end from members of the Departmental staff will be appreciated.

---PBA---

BOOK REVIEWS

Administrators who are confronted with the problem of putting their ideas across with either superior or subordinate will find many valuable suggestions in "Strategy in Handling People" by Ewing T. Webb and John J. B. Morgan. The authors have followed an excellent technique in preparing this book in that hundreds of anecdotes of famous people have been used to illustrate the broad principle set out by them.

The broad field of personnel management as applied to the individual has been carefully covered in "Personnel Management" by Walter D. Scott, Robert C. Clothier and Stanley B. Mathewson. The book does not attempt to set up a procedure which will prove satisfactory in all cases, but rather sets out the principles which seem fundamental at the present time. This book should be of interest to all administrators who are interested in securing the highest degree of efficiency from their personnel.

COOPERATIVENESS

Willingness to work with others to complete successfully a great project is more commendable than the endeavor to accomplish a smaller task for which the principal incentive is personal credit and recognition.

---Dr. John R. Mohler

New Procedure in Making Appointments

By

S. B. Herrell, Asst. Chief.,
Division of Appointments.

At the direction of the President, the Chief Coordinator's Office has been designated as a clearing house through which appointments in the Government Service are made. This arrangement was brought about by the President's desire to utilize personnel, which because of completed or curtailed work had become surplus in some departments, in filling vacancies in other branches of the service instead of bringing new people into the service. It was also his wish that temporary positions in the Government Service be filled by the temporary detail of employees from other departments when they were available due to seasonal slack of work.

All departments of the Government made a survey of their employees in the competitive classified service, both Washington and field services, and reported such employees as were considered surplus or available for temporary detail to the Chief Coordinator and the Civil Service Commission in order to establish surplus registers there. The various bureaus and offices of the Government are now required to submit reports on employees available for transfer or detail currently and as soon as it is determined they are available field officers will report direct to their bureau chiefs in Washington personnel available for transfer or detail. Civil Service Form 375 should be obtained from and submitted for those considered surplus and available for transfer together with information as to when the employee will be released, if known; the lowest salary acceptable to the employee in a new position; and whether or not the employee will accept temporary appointment. In the case of employees reported available for detail the actual period of availability should be indicated. The above procedure is necessary in order that surplus registers may be maintained by the Civil Service Commission.

In filling all positions in the competitive classified service of the Department of Agriculture, either temporary or permanent, Washington or field, prior consideration is given to surplus lists in the Civil Service Commission in Washington and the offices of the District Managers of the Commission in the field. Certification from the regular registers of eligibles or for reinstatements are not authorized as long as properly qualified persons are available on the surplus list.

No temporary personnel can be employed in Washington, D. C., without first obtaining a clearance from the Chief Coordinator, through the Department's Division of Appointments. Clearances for temporary personnel in the field service must be obtained by the field officer making the appointment from the Area Coordinator direct. Where Federal business associations are properly organized the area coordinators have delegated authority to those activities to give clearance. After clearance has been obtained from the area coordinator or business association, the field officer will forward a copy to the Civil Service District Manager with the usual request for certification of eligibles or authority, as heretofore.

EMPLOYMENT OF ATTORNEYS NOT NECESSARY
IN CONNECTION WITH RETIREMENT CLAIMS

Employees and former employees of the Department have sometimes engaged the services of attorneys to represent or assist them in handling claims under the retirement act. Such employment is an entirely unnecessary expense. Officials of the Department of Agriculture, the Civil Service Commission, and the Veterans' Administration are always ready and willing to advise and assist employees on retirement matters. If an employee is not satisfied with the way his claim is decided, he always has the right of appeal.

It may be stated that the Retirement Act contains no provisions whatever for the recognition of attorneys; however, under a general authority conferred by law, agents or attorneys who have been admitted to practice before the department which handles retirement claims and who are in good standing may be recognized to represent claimants in connection with the prosecution of claims under the retirement act. Employees of the Department of Agriculture, of course, have no means of knowing who those agents or attorneys are.

---PBA---

RECENT COMPTROLLER'S DECISIONS

If subscriptions to magazines and periodicals ran always in periods of a year or less a certain Government department would have been spared a recent unpleasant experience. Publishers have a way, however, of fixing subscription terms with a cheerful disregard of Federal fiscal and accounting exigencies, and in this way the department in question found itself committed to a subscription from July 1, 1931 to December 31, 1932. It was paid in advance from current funds. But when the voucher was reached for audit the General Accounting Office figured by proportion the cost of a straight year's subscription and disallowed the rest. The department in vain advanced the plea that it had "never received suspensions in the past for similar purchases and it is understood that it has been the practice of other departments to make purchases of this kind." The Comptroller General, A-40563, Feb. 6, 1932, announced the rule: "****The cost of subscriptions to magazines or periodicals for one year or less may be charged to the appropriation current when the subscription was ordered, notwithstanding that it may cover deliveries extending into a subsequent fiscal year, but this has not been extended to authorize payment more than one year's subscription in advance, or for more than one year's subscription from the same fiscal year appropriation."

---PBA---

There cannot be a good and economical government without capable and industrious public employees.

Navy Lubricating Oil Contracts

By

J. M. Lockman, Associate Chief,
Division of Purchase, Sales & Traffic.

For several years past many field activities of this Department have availed themselves of the opportunity of procuring lubricating oils from the annual Navy Department contracts. These contracts provide for the furnishing of various grades of several types of oils, including motor oils. Contract prices are usually considerably lower than those obtainable in small quantities locally, and the quality, reported to be of high grade, is based on Navy Department specifications and subject to Navy test.

The oils are contracted for in cans and cases, in steel barrels or drums, metal drums, or tank cars; the minimum quantity that may be ordered is a case of two five-gallon cans. The oil is delivered by the contractor on 10 days' notice at any railroad station in the United States.

While the Navy Department each year attempts to secure, in advance of advertisement, subscription by other departments to its schedules, the contracts, when made, also carry a provision under which activities may be added during the contract period by application of the department concerned to the Secretary of the Navy.

Wherever provision can be made for the economical handling of the minimum of two five-gallon cans of oil, and the activity is not already included in the contract, it is recommended that the official in charge communicate with his bureau in Washington requesting that his activity be included in the contract, if, in his opinion, such action is desirable. Unless the quantity is unusually large, he need not estimate the amount of oil to be purchased, but merely indicate the grades of oil and types of containers his needs involve. The particular activity and geographical area to be covered must be stated.

It must be understood, also, that activities already under contract for oils from other sources can not be included in the Navy contracts within the duration of the contract period of such other contracts.

The following paragraph from a recent circular of the Chief Coordinator sets forth the obligation of any activity participating in the Navy contracts:

"It should be understood that those activities participating in Navy lubricating oil contracts are obligated to order oil from the contractors when the contracts provide for delivery of oils suitable for the purpose to which they are to be used. In other words, participating activities should understand that they are obligated to use the contracts to the exclusion of other methods of procurement when suitable oils are obtainable in the forms of delivery required. Attention is also invited to the restrictions placed upon all purchases within the District of Columbia by the Act of June 17, 1910, and amendments thereto."

"Checking Up On Your Office"

"There are few offices where some form of check-up or appraisal is unnecessary," is the opinion expressed by Norman C. Firth, managing editor of SYSTEM in his second article in December System on Check-Your-Office Series.

Mr. Firth advocates the use of a list of questions concerning (1) Routines and Methods (2) Clerical Output (3) Control of Output, further stating that, "Properly used it prevents the continuation of ineffective procedures that have just grown up with the business and are used merely because they have not been subjected to careful analysis."

Rate yourself either by answering "Yes" or "No". A numerical basis may be used such as substituting the number "5" for yes, number "3" for no, and number "1" for answer other than yes or no. For comparison the rating can be expressed on a percentage basis by dividing the total score by the highest possible score.

The McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, Inc., New York Publishers of System offer to furnish additional copies of these forms upon request. Here are the questions:

ROUTINES AND METHODS

	<u>Rating</u>
1. Have all useless steps in procedures and routines been discontinued?	_____
2. Are there as few steps as possible?	_____
3. Is there a specific and understood purpose for each step?	_____
4. Does the work go in a direct manner from one person to another without needless repeating of the same work or records?	_____
5. Does work move along regularly and speedily without being held up?	_____
6. Is each step always performed in the same manner?	_____
7. Are the most effective methods being used in each instance?	_____
8. Is the same operation performed the same way by all workers?	_____
9. Have duplicate operations or forms been eliminated?	_____
10. Are reports submitted only as often as needed?	_____
11. Has the spending of excessive time on details, at the expense of more important matters, been eliminated?	_____
12. Has the amount of stationery and supplies kept in desks or cabinets in departments or sections been limited?	_____

13. Is a sufficient amount of stationery and supplies kept on hand? _____
14. Are clerks kept supplied with the working materials? _____
15. Are supervisors furnished with the necessary records and materials? _____
16. Are fountain pens and mechanical pencils used where they are appropriate? _____
17. Are carbon paper and typewriter ribbons used for a sufficiently long time, and not for too long a time? _____
18. Has the use of usable printed forms or good stationery for scratch pads been eliminated? _____
19. Are obsolete forms used for scratch pads? _____
20. In the interior telephone directory is there an alphabetical listing by persons' names? _____
21. Are lights and the electric current turned off when not in use? _____
22. During the lunch period is someone present in your section or department to answer inquiries on telephone calls? _____

CLERICAL OUTPUT

Rating

1. Do you know how much work each worker should do and whether he is doing it? _____
2. Has all possible work been standardized? _____
3. Is all standardized work measured? _____
4. Is work subdivided as far as is effective? _____
5. Is each employee's work definitely assigned without too many jobs to any one person? _____
6. Are all workers kept uniformly busy on useful work? _____
7. Are clerks kept on one job a sufficiently long time? _____
8. Are incompetent new workers dismissed as soon as adequate training efforts reveal their incompetence? _____
9. In lending workers between departments or sections, is the best good of the whole company considered? _____
10. Is work started promptly in the morning and after lunch, without delays on the way to desks, and without waiting for the bell? _____

	Rating
11. Is work continued up to the end of the morning and afternoon working periods without undue preparations for stopping work?	_____
12. Interruptions to workers?	_____
13. Argument?	_____
14. Gossiping?	_____
15. Procrastination?	_____
16. Absences from desks?	_____
17. Delays in answering telephones?	_____
18. Unnecessary questions?	_____
19. Stalling or soldiering by clerks?	_____
20. Personal telephone calls?	_____
21. Personal correspondence?	_____

CONTROL OF OUTPUT

	Rating
1. Are there well planned provisions for handling peaks of work?	_____
2. Are peaks forecast from such indicators as incoming mail or orders or from experience, so far as is possible?	_____
3. Are the well planned provisions for peaks used when peaks are expected?	_____
4. Is overtime avoided in normal seasons?	_____
5. If they are appropriate are graphic methods used to compare actual with planned production?	_____
6. Do you know what force is required for stated volumes of work?	_____
7. Have "rush" jobs been eliminated as far as possible?	_____
8. Has each supervisor a good follow-up system?	_____
9. Have delays in work been eliminated?	_____
